

Covers the Torrance District Like a Blanket.

# Torrance Herald

"There is no Substitute for Circulation."

Tenth Year—No. 67

Published Semi-Weekly

TORRANCE, CALIF., FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1924

Every Tuesday and Friday

5c Per Copy

## L. A. COUNTY GRAND JURY PROBES ALLEGED POLICE EXTORTION CASE

### Thousand Dollar Diamond Murder Motive in Torrance Mystery

#### HUNT RUM GANG AS KILLERS

Sheriff's Department Believes Prewitt Murdered for Diamond Ring

PURPLE GARTER IS CLUE Sift of Earth Near Mystery Grave Reveals Tooth and Elastic

That Albert W. Prewitt, retired Los Angeles business man, whose body was found in a shallow grave east of Torrance last Saturday, was brutally murdered by bootleggers, is the theory on which officers of the sheriff's department are working today.

The body, according to deputy sheriffs working on the case, has been practically identified as that of Prewitt, who formerly was postmaster in a South Dakota city.

Prewitt disappeared on the night of April 12, according to his widow, leaving his home in Los Angeles, he had \$50 in his pocket and cashed a check for \$100, telling a friend, according to officers, that he intended to use the money to buy a quantity of bonded liquor.

The officers are working on the theory that because of the bootleggers, bought his whiskey, and that the booze-runners, attracted by the large thousand-dollar ring he wore, crushed his skull with a heavy instrument and buried him in the shallow grave in the frequented meadow east of Normandie avenue.

A purple garter found among the clothes of the dead man identified the murdered man as Prewitt, according to the investigators. Prewitt wore purple garters on the night of his disappearance. Earth found around the bones in the gruesome grave was sifted Wednesday under supervision of Undersheriff Biscailuz. It yielded a gold inlaid tooth, which has been sent to Dr. F. H. Borst, a dentist of Sioux Falls, S. D., and to Dr. O. E. Bronson of Fresno for identification. These two dentists are said to have done work on Prewitt's teeth.

#### Vituperation, Lack Of Peddler's Card, Lands John in Toils

Attempting to solicit business in Torrance for his Lomita dry-cleaning establishment, John Venurini is alleged to have "abused" Officer Dillon when the Torrance policeman asked him for his peddler's license. John had no license, but a large vocabulary, according to Dillon, who took the dry-cleaner into custody on a charge of disturbing the peace. Venurini pleaded not guilty before Justice of the Peace Hunter, who set bail at \$500, which the defendant furnished. The dry-cleaner is slated for hearing September 12 at 10 o'clock.

#### CENTRAL EVANGELICAL

Francis A. Zeller, Pastor. Sunday school, 9:45 a. m. Vacations are over, and next Sunday all will be back. Join them. Morning service, 11 o'clock. Rev. A. J. Barton of Los Angeles, presiding elder. Evening service, 7:30 o'clock. The feature of the evening service will be an address by Miss Elsie Burkhalter on her deaconess work in Philadelphia. Special singing: The Christian Endeavor will largely have charge of the service. Orchestra practice Tuesday evening. Choir Thursday evening. Midweek prayer meeting and Bible study on Wednesday evening. A reopening service will be held in the church Sunday afternoon, beginning at 2:30. Announcement elsewhere.

#### Local Schools To Open Here Monday, Sept. 8

Greatly Increased Enrollment Expected as Day of Opening Nears

Public schools will open in Torrance next Monday with greatly increased attendance, it is expected. The following list of pupils were on the high school honor roll of last year, measured by the standards of the California Scholarship Federation. Nearly all of the high schools of Southern California are members of this organization: Hazel Vieths, Ione Barnett, Helen Bartsch, Ethel Bodley, Clara Totter, Gwendolyn Miller, Geraldine Miller, Mildred Richhart, Helen Morse, Hazel Bashaw, Lucille Weaver, Clifford Grant, John Shidler, Richard Sinclair, Madelyn Sims, Alma Austin, Floyd Chandler, Helen Bodley, Kathryn Wheaton, Gordon Bau, Josephine Isenstein, Richard Von Hagen, Toshi Kiyomura, Eileen Woodburn, Harry Phillips, Theodore Rathbun, Verna Payne, Arnold Campbell, Clifford Crane, Melvin McFarland, Christine Harman, George Shidler, Irene Dunlop, Helen Burke, Margaret Tiffany, Frances Haynes, Mary Shilma, Doris Spoon, Marian Vieths, Alice Post, De Oe Barnard, Georgiana Kidd, Isabelle Songer, Andrew Fraser, George Watson, James Bagley, Zeida Sinclair, Charles Brown, Warren McMullen, Evelyn Ryan.

The entire high school faculty will return, with the exception of Miss Working, the millinery teacher, who expects to embark on the ship of matrimony, and make her future home in Kern county. Three new teachers will be added to the faculty. Albert Cruzan will take charge of the public speaking, debating, dramatics and school plays. Mr. Cruzan had charge of this department in a southern university for a number of years. Three years ago he was a member of the Torrance faculty.

### TOWNE ALKE

"Just for Fun"

By RAS BERRY

Doc Stevenson is quite a picture taker and has got a dandy scene of San Pedro harbor which he took by moonlight hanging in his office. The picture and not Doc is hanging in the office. This is a



photo that Doc snapped of Mars during the planet's opposition. The canals are plainly visible in Doc's print.

The fire dept. is going to have some new uniforms to parade in and most everybody in town agrees the boys should ought to be allowed to put on a little dog. They are all volunteers and are going to pay for half of the uniforms themselves.

The El Rancho Golf Club is suing some guy because his mules got on the golf course and matted it all up and Harry Warren says he wonders why they kick so much about mules when there is plenty of jackasses on every golf course.

Mrs. J. C. McVey says Mac's asthma is so bad he can't stay at all up and Harry Warren says he wonders why they kick so much about mules when there is plenty of jackasses on every golf course.

#### Torrance Will Mobilize Men On Defense Day

Mayor Smith Issues Proclamation Calling on Legion to Take Charge

Torrance will officially observe Defense Day next Friday, Sept. 12. This was assured today when R. R. Smith, president of the board of city trustees, issued a proclamation, in accordance with action taken by the board Tuesday night, calling upon the Bert S. Crossland Post, American Legion, to appoint committees which shall decide the manner in which the day will be observed here.

Defense Day plans contemplate mobilization of all the available forces in the nation. Local plans, according to Commander James Scott of the Legion, will include voluntary mobilization of all men of military age—between 18 and 45 years—at given points, squad drilling, patriotic talks, a "census" of potential volunteers and possible billets for troops in times of emergency, and a parade, headed by the Boy Scout Drum and Bugle Corps.

The members of the Bert S. Crossland Post will meet next Monday night at 8:30 at the First National Bank to receive instructions.

Commander Scott today named the following committee: Alfred Gaudier, Spanish-American War Veterans; R. J. Deininger, board of trustees; George Proctor, Union Tool Company; Rev. F. A. Zeller, representing the churches; Carl L. Hyde, Pacific Electric shops; W. L. Moore, Columbia Steel Corporation.

Definite mobilization plans will be announced in next Tuesday's issue of The Herald.

Mayor Smith's proclamation follows: "Whereas, September 12th is set aside as a national day of test mobilization, and

"Whereas, We, the board of trustees of the city of Torrance, consider it the duty of our city to help make the day a success, and

"Whereas, We consider this not a mark of embarrassing military, but furthering world peace by being prepared;

"Be it, therefore, resolved that we recommend that a representative committee of citizens be appointed by the American Legion, to make plans for this day, and that we stand ready to give our heartiest support to this program.

"Be it further resolved that we recommend a showing of the strength of our town by a parade.

"Be it further resolved that this resolution be sent to the local papers and each of the factories in the city of Torrance.

(Signed) "R. R. SMITH, President."

Night School Will Open Here Oct. 8. The Torrance evening high school will open on Monday evening, Oct. 8, at 7 p. m. The first evening will be for the purpose of enrollment. Classes will be conducted in all departments in which a sufficient number of pupils enroll. Pupils are asked to enroll in workshop, machine shop and auto mechanics if they wish to take these subjects, but classes cannot begin the first evening because of the fact that the shops are not yet equipped for night school work. This will be accomplished soon after school begins. Last year classes were conducted in art, dressmaking, millinery, English for foreigners, shorthand, typewriting, bookkeeping, mechanical drawing, and mathematics. All classes are free.

#### OBSERVATIONS

SIX years ago next Friday the First American Army, composed of the magnificent divisions of the A. E. F., under the personal leadership of Gen. John J. Pershing, smashed the Saint Mihiel salient, that gigantic "piece of pie" that had for four years projected dangerously into the allied lines. Six years ago next Friday Pershing saw the organization which he had perfected operating as an army unit, saw it operate exactly according to preconceived staff plans, saw it drive the Germans back upon Metz and establish American leadership and courage before the eyes of the world. And now, on the anniversary of the date when those gallant lads in Olive Drab took off through the tangled fastnesses of barbed wire under the striking splendor of a rolling barrage from American artillery, Pershing will retire from the Army of the United States.

Today the petty prejudices of individual soldiers against their commander-in-chief must have been dispelled. Most of them arose from the irksomeness of military discipline to an army of civilian democrats, who had so suddenly been transported from the freedom of lay life to the rigid discipline of camp and trench. The people of the country and the veterans of the A. E. F. must realize today that there now steps out of public service the man who did more than any other one American to win the war. Pershing went to France with a gigantic task to perform. Had he failed, his would have been the blame. He was the supreme commander, with Washington looking him up in all that he did. "Black Jack" Pershing did his job well. He went to win the war and won it. He was stern; uncompromising; a fault. But under his leadership two million men, who had been civilians just a few months before, became an organized, well-fed, well-clothed, victorious fighting machine.

THE judgment of history will make of Pershing a great general, who combined with superb military ability the qualities of an able diplomat and the characteristics of a superlative organizing executive.

When Pershing went to France all the influence of the allies was brought to bear in an effort to scatter the American forces throughout the allied armies, a battalion to a regiment. Pershing refused, and won his point, with what credit to his own judgment was later established by the glorious victories won by American troops. American command, on all fronts, and especially at Saint Mihiel, Chateau-Thierry, Soissons, and the Argonne.

It was Pershing's persistence that finally forced the British to concede to unified command under Marshal Foch, with what credit to his judgment was later established by the increased mobility of the allied armies in those crucial days of the Spring of 1918, and the success of the unified grand assault in the Foch line. Pershing insisted that the Americans utilize the French service of supplies. Pershing refused. Instead he ordered whole harbors rebuilt, great railroad lines constructed, and the organization of completely American S. O. S.—a stupendous undertaking. He raised James Harbord from a colonel to a major-general and put him in charge of this gigantic work. When the American army started operating as a unit in September, the service of supplies was American through and through. It functioned perfectly. Historical records insist that the Americans utilized the French service of supplies, and had that service failed to function, the whole effort of our men at the front might have gone for naught, to the discredit of the commander-in-chief.

The military genius of the American commander is no more strikingly displayed than by a study of the situation in July, 1918. In July the American stopped the Germans northwest of Chateau-Thierry. There ensued a terrific local engagement that lasted almost six weeks, with the Americans hanging to their hard-won ground with a courage unsurpassed in the annals of American history.

IN the second week of July the Chateau-Thierry salient extended far down into the line, a menace to Paris. One of the western corners of the triangle was Soissons, on the eastern Rhemes. The American general staff, realizing that a wedge might be driven into one side of the salient by the allies, ordered a tremendous attack south of Rhemes to flatten out the salient.

This attack took place on July 15. On the morning of July 16 Pershing, Haig and Foch met. Pershing insisted that a counter-attack be started at once south of Soissons, that the wedge which the Germans were endeavoring to make impossible on the Rhemes side of the salient be driven into the Soissons side. Foch and Haig—this is fact—reasoned that the time was not yet ripe for a counter-attack, that the morale of the French and British armies was too low and that the American forces had not yet been sufficiently tested in offensive warfare. They wanted to wait until the Spring of 1919.

Pershing insisted that the time was ripe for a counter-attack and that a strong stroke south of Soissons might be the turning point of the war. He offered two veteran American divisions for the assault, the First and Second, regular army units. He won his point. The two American divisions, with the French Algerian division between them, smashed into the Soissons sector on the morning of July 18, after 36 hours of forced marching in 48 hours, at the cost of tremendous loss of life, they captured the main highway and mail railroad running down the salient to Chateau-Thierry, stormed the heights above Soissons and made it absolutely essential for the Germans to evacuate, under stiff rear-guard actions, the entire Chateau-Thierry salient.

The assault recommended by Pershing marked the turning point of the war, brought untold renown to American men as splendid soldiers, and branded Pershing as the military equal, if not the superior, of any commander in any general in our history. He has earned and deserves the thanks of his countrymen.

OWNERS of oil lands are naturally intensely interested in the deep test well now being drilled by the Shell Oil Company. Discovery of a second productive formation in the field here would be of the utmost importance to the community, both in the matter of return to land-owners and renewal of drilling activity throughout the field. It is yet too early to be overly optimistic concerning this second sand business. Up to date no cores have been brought up, which indicate that a second sand exists. About all that can be said right now is that some small showings of oil have been encountered at levels never before explored in the heart of the field. These showings do not indicate that production can be obtained from these new levels. On the contrary, they establish the opposite. What lies below the levels already pioneered is entirely a matter of conjecture. He who is not too optimistic will not be disappointed and may be agreeably surprised.

Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Phillips of Cotia Pershing were entertained over the holiday by Mr. Phillips' parents, Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Phillips, of Los Angeles. Dinner guests Sunday of Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Babcock of Gramercy avenue were Rev. and Mrs. Lingenfelter and daughters Martha and Ruth, of Cotia avenue.

#### Home Service At Evangelical Church Sunday

People Invited to Fine Program Here at 2:30 P. M.

An interesting meeting will be held in Central Evangelical church Sunday afternoon, Sept. 7, at 2:30. It is the reopening and "At-Home" service.

For some months past improvements have been under way at the church. The new Guild hall was built for social purposes, and more especially for the use of the primary department of the Sunday school. The building and equipment are such as any church in the city of Torrance may well take pride in.

The main auditorium of the church has been newly repainted and retined and new seats have been installed and a part of the church carpeted. Many persons of the city have not yet inspected the new quarters of the old building since it was remodeled. So an afternoon hour has been chosen for this service to enable all who care to do so to look it over. Besides the many Torrance friends who will be present at the service next Sunday, there will be scores from Los Angeles, Santa Ana, Anaheim, Long Beach and other points.

The regular choir and men's quartet of Central church and the choir from Los Angeles. The church will sing. A men's quartet and a ladies' quartet from this church will sing. Santa Ana church will furnish several musical numbers. Prof. A. Miller of Pasadena, one of the best known vocalists in Southern California, is on the program. Dr. A. J. Boelter of Los Angeles will have charge of the service. Among other ministers present will be Rev. W. E. Grote, Rev. E. J. Nickel, Rev. A. L. Horn, and Rev. U. Schauer, of Los Angeles; Rev. F. Cordes and Rev. George Strait, of Anaheim; Rev. G. A. Stierle, of Santa Ana; Rev. G. G. Schmit, of Anaheim; Rev. Otto Spreng and Rev. G. Husser, of Redondo Beach; Rev. E. W. Matz, of Long Beach. The Torrance ministers and their congregations have been invited to attend. They have signified their purpose to be present. Several three-minute talks will be given by ministers present and by W. Harold Kingsley. The service will be exceptional in interest and inspiration. Every person who comes will be warmly welcome. It will be a neighborly gathering. All are invited.

#### Judge Warns Oil Worker to Take Care of Family

Should E. D. Radcliffe of Amapola avenue, Torrance, fail to provide for his wife and two children, he will be dealt with severely.

That was the warning issued to Radcliffe, who is an employee of the Union Oil Company, when he appeared before Justice of the Peace L. J. Hunter on a charge of non-support. The court advised the oil worker that he must show proof by October 3 that he was providing for his family. Radcliffe was arrested on complaint of his wife, by Torrance police.

#### APRON SALE AND DINNER

Thursday, Sept. 18, is the day set for the apron sale to be held by the Ladies of the Eastern Star. Aprons for every purpose and occasion are being donated. Go early and make your choice. A dinner will be served from noon until 1 o'clock. Oh, yes! It's to be at Masonic hall.

#### MISSIONARY MEETING

The Missionary Society of the Christian church met Wednesday at the home of Mrs. Crane of 807 Portola avenue. Plans were formulated for the raising of the local appropriation for the golden jubilee of the United Christian Missionary Societies.

Bankrupt Sale—Coles Variety Store, the great Cut-Hat Store, Torrance, between Herald office and postoffice. Big bargain event.—Adv.

#### Deputy Dist. Att'y Conducts Sweeping Quiz of Witnesses

Six Testify at Hall of Records Inquiry When County Officials Order Complete Examination of Evidence and Testimony

ABBOTT, MATERIAL WITNESS, IS NOT LOCATED Subpoena Servers Fail to Find Former Police Officer, Who Is Said to Have Confessed Receiving Money in Case of Five Compton Men

The scene of the probe into the alleged extortion plot by which five Compton men are said to have been victimized in Torrance on July 29 shifted yesterday afternoon from Torrance and Lomita to the grand jury room in the Los Angeles county Hall of Records.

A sweeping probe into the whole affair was ordered by Deputy District Attorney Richardson Wednesday afternoon, when he declined to recommend dismissal of the charges against City Recorder James L. King until the whole affair has been sifted down by the Los Angeles grand jury.

The deputy district attorney was presented with the evidence in the case Wednesday by City Attorney Perry G. Briney and City Trustee J. S. Torrance. He immediately ordered subpoenas issued for all witnesses, summoning them to appear before the grand jury yesterday afternoon at 1:30.

Testimony taken before the grand jury yesterday afternoon is reported to have tended toward the complete exoneration of City Recorder James L. King.

Examine Six Men Six witnesses were examined by the grand jury. One at a time and in the presence of no other persons except the deputy district attorney and the nineteen grand jurors, B. F. Frymier, A. P. Morewood, James L. King, J. S. Torrance, B. M. Anderson and Ollie Stevenson testified.

Frymier is said to have repeated to the jurors the testimony contained in an affidavit made to Torrance and Briney during the investigation in Torrance, stating that he gave \$800 to Attorney Morewood in return for a promise that the five Compton men, facing felony charges, would be released. Frymier, who was one of the five Compton men, who voluntarily gave information which later led to the issuance of warrants, was examined for almost an hour.

Recorder King was then called into the room and testified of his innocence of the whole alleged plot.

Attorney Morewood and former Chief Anderson were questioned only about five minutes each.

J. S. Torrance was twice called into the grand jury room to give testimony.

Stevenson Testifies Ollie Stevenson was before the jurors for almost half an hour. He testified mostly concerning the affidavit, made at the time of the arrest by Dr. George P. Shidler, to the effect that the five Compton men were "under the influence of liquor" when arrested. This affidavit was not introduced at the trial. Stevenson is said to have testified that Recorder King did not know of its existence.

Other witnesses present, but who were not called to testify, were Arthur Meinzer, Acting Chief William Phillips, Ray Leslie, Mrs. James L. King, Elmer A. Jones, Perry G. Briney and W. Harold Kingsley, all of Torrance, and A. A. Higgins, F. Mangole, J. A. Draffen and E. L. Foster, all of Compton. Attorney Richardson told all witnesses who were not examined that they would be called later if needed.

#### Relatives Are Present

Mr. King's relatives were present to testify that he was with them in Los Angeles at the very time Attorney Morewood was said to have consulted him in Torrance concerning the disposition of the Compton men's cases.

Mrs. Anderson, wife of the former chief, and I. G. Anderson, his father, were also present in the courtroom. Former Motorcycle Officer Stanley Abbott, one of the most material witnesses in the case, and whose affidavit concerning the alleged receipt of money in connection with the case is in the hands of Richardson, was not present. A subpoena was issued for him Wednesday afternoon, but was not served. Officers were unable to locate him in Torrance. Friends said he was in Compton, but telephone calls to that city yesterday failed to locate him.

#### Stress on Affidavit

Deputy District Attorney Richardson, during the investigation, placed unusual stress on the affidavit of Dr. Shidler, which was not introduced as evidence at the trial on July 29.

The grand jury investigation, ordered by the district attorney, will take the place of the preliminary hearing of the case before Justice of the Peace L. J. Hunter in Lomita.

(Continued on Last Page)